

Hazing Policy

At ACC, hazing refers to any action or situation that intentionally or recklessly endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or admission into any clubs/organizations operating under the sanction of Austin Community College. ACC provides that:

- Hazing with or without the consent of a student is prohibited by the college and any violation of the prohibition renders both the person inflicting the hazing and the person submitting to the hazing subject to discipline.
- Initiations or activities by groups may not include any features that are dangerous, harmful, or degrading to the student. Violation of this prohibition renders both the clubs/organizations and participating individuals subject to discipline.

Texas State Law (summary)

Under state law (VTCA Education Code, Sections 4.5 – 4.58) individuals or clubs/organizations engaging in hazing could be subject to fines and charged with a criminal offense.

According to the law a person can commit a hazing offense not only by engaging in a hazing activity but also by soliciting, directing, encouraging, aiding or attempting to aid another in hazing intentionally, knowingly or recklessly allowing hazing to occur; or by failing to report in writing to the Office of Student Life first hand knowledge that a hazing incident is planned or has occurred. The fact that a person consented to or acquiesced in a hazing activity is not a defense for prosecution for hazing under the law.

In an effort to encourage reporting hazing events, the law grants immunity from civil liability to any person who reports a specific event to the Office of Student Life and immunizes that person from participation in any judicial proceedings resulting from that report. The penalty for failure to report is a fine of up to \$1,000, up to 180 days in jail, or both. Penalties for other hazing offenses vary accordingly to the severity of the injury that results, and includes fines from \$500 to \$10,000 and/or confinement for up to two years. The law does not affect or in any way restrict the right of the college to enforce its own rules against hazing.

The law defines hazing as any intention, knowing or reckless act, occurring on or off campus of an education institution, by one person alone or action with others, directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are, or include, students at an institution.